

## Army will be modernised further, says PM

CHITTAGONG, Dec 18: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today reiterated the government's firm resolve to further strengthen and modernise the country's army to keep pace with the nation's march towards economic progress, reports BSS.

The main spirit of the Liberation War was the establishment of democracy, self-reliance, economy and the protection of the national independence and sovereignty, she said.

"We have established democracy in the country. Our economic progress is on and we will further strengthen and modernise our army," Begum Zia said.

The Prime Minister was addressing the President's Parade marking the commissioning of the gentleman cadet of the 31st BMA Long Course and 10th Short Service Special Course at the Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA) parade ground at Bhatiauri here.

Company senior under officer Ahsan Habib received the Chief of the Army Staff Gold Medal for the best performance in military subjects.

Company Quarter Master Sergeant SM Anwar Hossain was given the Osmany Gold Medal for the best academic feat.

Agriculture Minister Majid, UI Huq, Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister M Morshed Khan,

State Minister Dr A Moyeen Khan, Amanullah Aman MP, Begum Rosy Kabir MP, Wahidul Alam MP, diplomats, chief of the naval staff Rear Admiral Mohammad Mohamminul Islam, chief of the air staff Air Vice Marshal Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, high civil and military officials, parents and guardians of the cadets and elites of the city were present on the occasion.

Democracy has been established in the country after a long struggle, the Prime Minister said and added there was no alternative to democratic system to flourish one's talent. She hoped that the newly-commissioned officers would be able to develop their talent in the free atmosphere.

The further modernisation of the army, Begum Zia said, depended on the overall development of the country.

The size of GDP increased and the per capita income raised, the Prime Minister said and hoped to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh for the country's future generation in an atmosphere of peace, stability and democracy.

Side by side with protecting every inch of land of the country, the Prime Minister said, the members of the army also earned appreciation of the countrymen for their services to the affected people.

She also paid deep respects to Shaheed Lieutenant Ahsan and Shaheed Lieutenant Musfique who had sacrificed their lives for the motherland.

## Russia

From Page 1 Col 8: boomed northwest of Grozny shortly after a Kremlin deadline to disarm expired at midnight.

Chechens remained defiant. Russia must withdraw its forces quickly and recognize our political independence," Chechen Vice President Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev said.

Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev had offered fast-track talks Saturday to end the fighting, but President Boris Yeltsin demanded Sunday that Dudayev sign a disarmament agreement first.

Yeltsin suggest a meeting between Dudayev and some top Russian ministers, but Yandarbiyev said Dudayev would meet only with Yeltsin or Prime Minister Viktor Chornomyrdin, the Interfax news agency said.

The air strikes came after people in Grozny spent a cold, anxious night in basements and makeshift bomb shelters.

Self-defense units patrolled the streets overnight and armoured vehicles headed for the city's outskirts. By mid-morning, traders were out at the market.

What is there to be scared of? said 25-year-old Khaza Khutoyeva as she peddled Russian champagne and American cigarettes. "I'm not scared at all."

The Russian government promised to use force humanely and urged women, children and non-combatants to leave Grozny. State-run Ostankino TV said Sunday that 67,000 refugees have fled to neighbouring Ingushetia.

Early Sunday, Russian tanks cut off the last three cars in the 11-car convoy headed toward Ingushetia from Grozny, near the village of Nesterovskaya.

Russian planes bombed an airfield as well as armoured vehicles southeast of Grozny on Sunday morning. Interfax also reported a rocket attack on Pervomayskoye, northeast of Grozny, and Khandkala, an eastern suburb.

News agencies said at least two Russian soldiers were killed in skirmishes with Chechen fighters.

## Missing Mutalib back home

From Page 1 Col 4: up by somebody and was brought to Barisal town, from there he was again shifted to a private orphanage called Babyhome in the Dhanmondi area of Dhaka, he said.

He was soon adopted and taken to Holland by William Weytes, owner of a recreational park.

But Mutalib could not forget his lost family. He longed to see his parents and family members again. With a lot of hope in his mind but with very little clues, he came to Bangladesh early last month in search of his lost kin.

On November 7, he went to Barisal town, lodged himself in a hotel and started the actual search process with virtually no information except for some fond memories of his childhood day with his family, he said.

All his initial efforts ended in failure. His problems were compounded by large number of people approaching him claiming to be his family members. He soon gave up his effort

and returned to Dhaka.

But he could not give up as the urge to see his family grew even stronger. He came back to Barisal and resumed his lonely search and spread the word that anyone claiming to be his family members has to be able to match some of his recollections from his childhood days.

Per chance he met a man named Moslem, who happened to know the story of the lost child, and guided Mutalib to a hut in Dhulia village under Baulf thana of Patuakhali district and the recollections of the family members matched his.

So, after long 17 years, earlier this month Mutalib met his mother, a brother and a sister. But he missed meeting his father, Yakub Ali Howladar, a farmer, who died a few years ago.

After staying with his family for a few days Mutalib returned to Holland on December 16, having completed his self-appointed mission, sure to return again to see his family.



On the occasion of the international seminar on Photojournalism The Daily Star held a dinner/discussion on Print Media and Photo Journalism at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. It was participated by Eleanor Taylor, Picture Editor of the Time Magazine, Gilles Saussier of French picture agency 'Editing' and Pablo Bartholemew of Gamma picture agency. The photo shows (L to R) Eleanor Taylor (speaking), Marloes Krigen, Managing Director, World Press Photo Foundation, Serge Challon of the 'Editing' and Dilip Mehta of the New York based Contact Press Images. It was attended by editors, senior journalists, news editors and photo journalists. — Star photo

## Arab-Bangladesh Business Forum formed

Commerce and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam has urged the Bangladeshi businessmen in Riyadh to make all-out efforts for popularising Bangladeshi products in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, reports UNB.

He was addressing the office-bearers of the Arab-Bangladesh Business Forum and leading Bangladeshi businessmen in the Saudi capital yesterday.

The commerce minister said it would open up a new vista in the country's export to Saudi Arabia, if the daily needs of more than five lakh Bangladeshis staying in the Kingdom could be met from Bangladeshi products, according to a message received in Dhaka.

Earlier, the minister was briefed about the aims and objectives of the Forum by its leaders Abdul Hye and Dr Arifur Rahman.

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## Campaign for DUTA polls heats up

By DU Correspondent

The teachers of the Dhaka University are now busy lobbying and campaigning for the elections of the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA).

The elections of the 15-member executive committee of the DUTA, the association of over 1,000 teachers of the University will be held on December 22.

Three panels — Blue, Pink and White — are contesting the DUTA polls this year. The teachers will elect their representatives for one year.

The candidates for the post of president are Prof ATM Zahurul Huq and Prof AK Monwar Uddin Ahmed of Economics department, from Blue and Pink panels respectively and Prof. Abul Kalam of International Relations Department from White panel.

Prof. SM Imamul Huq of Soil Science department, Mohammad Mohiuddin, Associate Professor of Management and Prof. Kamrul Ahsan Chowdhury of Sociology department are contesting for the post of General Secretary from the Blue, Pink and White panels respectively.

All the three panels have put up candidates for the other posts — Vice-President, Treasurer, Joint Secretary and 10 executive committee members.

The students who get at least twelve hundred marks in the SSC and HSC examinations can apply for the admission test.

Last year, the admission test was held on December 17.

## Jubo League leader killed

From Page 1 Col 5: where the autopsy was done yesterday.

Police said, the murder was committed because of rivalry between two groups in the locality. Ashraf was also wanted in some criminal cases lying with the Sutrapur police.

He was joint convener of Ward Number 76 unit of Jubo League.

UNB adds: Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday accused the government of planned terrorism to stick to power and warned that the consequences will not be good.

"BNP wants to prolong its autocracy keeping people hostage by creating terrorism... it is pushing the country towards a confrontation," she told a meeting arranged to condole the killing of a Jubo League worker in the city.

His body was brought to Awami League central office from Salimullah Medical College Hospital after autopsy in the afternoon.

Hasina said the current struggle for ensuring the rights to vote and food cannot be suppressed by resorting to

repression and killing. "We are waging a peaceful agitation while the BNP is trying to suppress it by terrorism," she said.

The Awami League president accused the prime minister of patronising terrorism and said people would give an appropriate reply to these heinous acts by wresting victory of the current agitation.

Awami League leader Begum Matia Chowdhury, MP, and Jubo League Chairman Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, MP, joint secretary Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Amir Hossain Gazi also addressed the meeting.

AL mass contact

From Page 1 Col 5: districts during the nine-day tour before December 27, the deadline set by the Opposition for the government to accept the demand for a caretaker administration.

The Opposition MPs plan to submit their resignation letters to the Speaker after holding separate rallies in the city on December 28. They are also likely to announce their next course of action at the rallies.

After leaving Somalia, Rashid had travelled many countries and finally came to New Delhi where he had been enjoying the refugee status drawing assistance, Attar said.

"We have an information that quite a good number of Somalis around the world have been travelling from country to country. Some of them have double registration and enjoying double assistance," the UNHCR Deputy Representative said.

Some 90 Somalis are now residing in Bangladesh, of whom about 25 are students studying at Dhaka University, DMCH and Chittagong Medical College. Most of them are getting financial assistance from UNHCR.

## MBBS admission

From Page 1 Col 5

Medical College and Chittagong Medical College one hundred fifty each, Myemensingh Medical College, Sher-e-Bangla Medical College, Barisal, Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College, Rajshahi Medical College and Rangpur Medical College one hundred twenty five each and fifty each in the new five medical colleges.

The new medical colleges are the Comilla Medical College, Faridpur Medical College, Bogra Medical College, Khulna Medical College and Dinajpur Medical College.

There are one hundred and forty marks, including one hundred in written and twenty in viva voce, for the admission test.

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## Govt plan for by-elections to be suicidal: JP

Jatiya Party leader Barrister Moudud Ahmed MP yesterday said the government will lose its legitimacy to govern the country with Opposition's en masse resignation from Parliament on December 28, reports UNB.

The government's plan for by-elections would be suicidal, he warned, saying that those elections will only lead to instability, violence and insecurity in society.

"As soon as we will leave Parliament the BNP will also have to leave the government because, for all practical purposes, it will collapse," he told a rally at Lalbagh Shishu Hospital in the afternoon.

Moudud said there is still time for the government to accept the demand of the Opposition. "If they think that they will be able to stay in power after the Opposition's resignation, they are totally mistaken."

The JP leader said if the demand for a caretaker government was not met by December 27, the Opposition would have no choice but to resign on December 28 and there would be no change in the already announced programme.

Referring to the recent initiative of the Speaker, Moudud said though encouraging, the initiative did not seem to have the force to lead to a solution of the present crisis.

## Housewife killed in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Dec 18: A housewife was killed when her brother-in-law allegedly stabbed her following a dispute over some family affairs at Godnail area of the district this morning.

The housewife, Mahmuda Akhtar Shilpi, received severe injuries on her breast, belly and face. She succumbed to her injuries after being taken to the Narayanganj General Hospital.

Shilpi, wife of Zakir Hossain of the Chittaranjan Cotton Mill, left behind two children.

A case was lodged with Siddhirganj thana in this connection.

## UNHCR refutes allegations by Somali national

A national of the civil strife-torn Somalia who sought refuge to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in Dhaka complained yesterday of maltreatment by the UNHCR officials, reports UNB.

Rashid Kaheini, 36, an accountant who flew in here from New Delhi on December 13, told reporters at the National Press Club that instead of giving protection or safety, the UNHCR officials handed over his six minor wards to Gulshan police on December 14.

The children starved whole day at the UNHCR office at Gulshan and the police station before they were taken away by their father at 6:30 in the evening, he alleged.

When contacted, Deputy Representative of the UNHCR Sa'ad Karim Al-Attar told UNB that Rashid, leaving his children at the UNHCR office, just ran away. After finding no other way before the office closed at 4:30 pm, they informed the police who took them to the police station.

"There are some procedures... moreover Rashid is registered with the UNHCR in India but came to Bangladesh without any reason."

"We have a policy and we do not want to encourage regular movement of refugees from one country to another if we encourage the 'illegal movement', Bangladesh will be soon flooded with refugees," the UNHCR official said.

After leaving Somalia, Rashid had travelled many countries and finally came to New Delhi where he had been enjoying the refugee status drawing assistance, Attar said.

"We have an information that quite a good number of Somalis around the world have been travelling from country to country. Some of them have double registration and enjoying double assistance," the UNHCR Deputy Representative said.

Some 90 Somalis are now residing in Bangladesh, of whom about 25 are students studying at Dhaka University, DMCH and Chittagong Medical College. Most of them are getting financial assistance from UNHCR.

When contacted, duty officer at Gulshan police station said they had brought six children to custody when the UNHCR officials in writing informed that six children gathered at their gate. They, however, handed over the minors to their father who came in the evening.

Rashid is now staying at Sobhanbagh with some Somali youths.

## The Midnight File

### Carter plays down hopes of a diplomatic coup

SARAJEVO, Dec 18: Jimmy Carter, who arrived here today to mediate in the Bosnian conflict, played down hopes of a diplomatic coup by stressing the 'limited role' he could play in achieving a settlement. Soon after landing at Sarajevo Airport, he went into talks with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic scheduled to last an hour, reports AFP.

### Dudayev wants referendum on Chechnya

GROZNY, Dec 18: Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev said today a referendum on his rebel republic's independence bid could offer a peaceful way to resolve the crisis in the break-away Caucasus state, reports AFP.

## Vehicular traffic increases sharply on Dhaka-Ctg Rd

Vehicular traffic increased sharply on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway following the opening of the Meghna-Gumti Bridge, surpassing even an ambitious projection, reports UNB.

A senior engineer of the Obayashi Corporation, the Japanese contractor of the Tk 234 crore bridge, told a group of reporters last week that the latest survey found about 5 thousand motor vehicles crossing the bridge everyday since its opening last month.

Earlier projection expected a maximum of 4537 vehicles passing over the bridge that put an end to ferry crossing in the route.

In view of the above-the-projection traffic, Engr Takao Kakoto suggested the capacity of Dhaka-Chittagong highway be increased.

He expressed satisfaction over working for the Meghna-Gumti bridge. "Weather was favourable and the Ministry of Communications extremely cooperative," he said.

Kakoto spoke highly of local engineers and other technical staff who worked for the bridge.

Many of the Bangladeshi engineers and staff had, however, been recruited by the company after completion of the Kanchpur Bridge project. They have since then been working with the Obayashi Corporation in different countries and attained high skill.

As the bridge has been constructed with the pressed concrete technique, he said, it does not require any major maintenance work during its 90-year lifetime except for keeping the surface clear.

Kakoto, however, said the

## Students' memo to Speaker today

The Action Committee for Resistance to Disparity in Education and Employment will submit a memorandum to the Law and Justice Minister today seeking equal opportunity in service for the pass course and honours students, reports UNB.

The committee, an organisation of the students with pass course background, will earlier hold a meeting at Aparajeyo Bangla on the Dhaka University campus and bring out a procession in support of its four-point demand.

After parading the campus, the demonstrators will submit memorandum of their demands to the minister, says a press release.

## Velika Kladusa

From Page 1 Col 4: help restart peace talks. Carter successfully broke diplomatic stalemates this year in Haiti and North Korea.

But a wide spectrum of officials expressed concern that Karadzic would try to use Carter's visit to undermine efforts to get the Serbs to accept an international peace plan.

The Serbs have rejected the plan, which would force them to pare their holdings of Bosnian territory to 49 per cent from the 70 per cent it now holds. The Bosnian government has accepted the plan.

White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta, appearing on CNN Saturday, questioned Carter's ability to resolve Bosnian issues 'because they are very complicated and because we have seen that, frankly, the motives... involved herewith the parties are always suspect.'

A statement from the Carter Centre in Atlanta said Carter decided to make the trip after 'extensive discussions' with the White House and UN officials.

"My purpose in travelling to the region is to seek ways to contribute to the cessation of hostilities and to encourage the acceptance of the contact group's plan as the basis for negotiations," he said.

The former Democratic President was accompanied by his wife, Rosalynn, and two negotiators.

White House officials urged Carter before his departure to avoid new initiatives and seek Serb acceptance of a peace plan drawn up by a big power 'contact group' comprising the United States, Britain, France, Germany and Russia.

The local police said they were detaining activists of SSP and rival Shi'ite group Tehrik Jafria Pakistan because of mounting tensions between them.

At least a dozen people have been detained including two with weapons, police said.

## Karachi

From Page 1 Col 2: In Karachi. The Karachi Stock Exchange closed early as there was no trading on the floor, brokers said.

## Bangladeshi troops

From Page 1 Col 3: troops were supposed to have moved out from the camp there and added that the exact number of troops still stationed at Velika Kladusa camp could not be ascertained last night.

He also pointed out that Velika Kladusa served as an administrative base of the Bangladesh peacekeeping battalion in Bihaq. The official said they would be in a position to know the latest details today.

Officials of the Foreign Ministry dealing with UN operations could not be reached despite repeated efforts.

An earlier report of December 7 circulated by AFP and AP mentioned that UN officials were planning to withdraw 400 Bangladeshi troops stuck in the middle of vicious fighting around Velika Kladusa in the far north-west corner of Bosnia.

However, another western news agency report shortly afterwards, quoting UN officials, said that the first batch of Bangladeshi peacekeepers that tried to pullout was turned back by the